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THE

TRUE WHIG SENTIMENT

OF

MASSACHUSETTS.

'Others may look to other sources, or rely upon other foundations for their hopes of the country; but I confess that at this period of my political life, — not now an early one, — I am full of the feeling that there is but one ground upon which the good men of this country can rest their trust. I see in the dark and troubled night which is now upon us, no star above the horizon, but the intelligent, patriotic, *united* Whig party of the United States.'

DANIEL WEBSTER.

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IN EXCHANGE

RESOLUTIONS

ADOPTED BY THE

WHIG STATE CONVENTION,

Holden in Boston, September 23, 1846.

Resolved, That this Convention, assembled for the purpose of nominating candidates for the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor of this Commonwealth, and taking the present occasion to express their sentiments on the momentous questions which agitate and divide the country; and to recommend to the people of Massachusetts such a course at the approaching election as will tend to a restoration of the inestimable blessings of peace, the restriction of slavery within its constitutional limits, and of the Executive power within its proper sphere, the protection of American labor, the improvement of the facilities for the commercial intercourse of the several states, and the maintenance of the good order and prosperity which have distinguished the old Bay State, under the government of her present administration, hereby declare their unabated confidence in the integrity, intelligence and patriotism of

GEORGE N. BRIGGS of Pittsfield, and
JOHN REED of Yarmouth,

and unanimously recommend them to the good people of the Commonwealth, as the Whig candidates for re-election to the offices which they now fill, with so much honor to themselves and advantage to the state.

The members of this Convention feel it to be their duty to call the attention of the people of Massachusetts to recent national occurrences, and to the present condition of public affairs. The country is in the midst of a war; a war with a neighboring republic greatly weaker than ourselves, formed upon our model, and under the influence of our example, by a bloody revolutionary struggle; a republic, it is to be admitted and lamented, which has not perfected its institutions, nor made that progress in the science and practice of free government, which was to have been expected; a republic which has suffered under the influence of that greatest bane to all republics, a domineering military power, and tending to place and displace civil rulers by the authority of arms; a republic, nevertheless, which has made important advances in the cause of humanity, which has abolished slavery

throughout all its possessions, and which has manifested no general spirit of hostility or agression towards the United States. With this republic we are now at war. Our armies have passed her frontier, are at this moment penetrating her interior country and threatening to seize and occupy her capital. What was the origin of this war? For what object was it at first waged? and for what end and purposes is it now carried on, at an expense which is involving this country in an enormous public debt?

These are questions highly important to be asked and to be answered. That citizens of the United States have just claims against the government of Mexico, which it has been and is the duty of their own government to enforce, is certainly true. But the present war was not declared on this account. This is equally true. What, then, is the origin of the war? In considering this question, for the present purpose, it is not necessary to complain of the annexation of Texas to the United States. Neither is it necessary to justify or excuse the delay of Mexico in acknowledging the independence of Texas, so long after that fact seemed to be so well established. Supposing Mexico to have been wrong to any extent in refusing to acknowledge the independence of Texas, and supposing Texas to have been constitutionally annexed to the United States, still it is not true that Mexico has made war on the United States on account of this annexation. The true origin of the war was an invasion by the troops of the United States. Mexico had always regarded the river Nueces as the western boundary of Texas, with as little doubt as we regard the St. Lawrence to be a part of our northern frontier. Within this boundary the troops of the United States were stationed, having been sent thither for no very apparent or urgent cause. In March last, these troops were ordered to proceed to the Rio Grande, and thus entered upon a territory, which Mexico contended had never been a part of Texas, but was still her own, though the whole of Texas had been severed from her. There are strong grounds upon which Mexico may hold the Nueces to be the true boundary, and, therefore, even if we state the case most favorably for the United States, still the territory between that river and the Rio Grande was a disputed territory. Mexico denied that it had ever been part of Texas, and denied therefore that it could now belong to the United States, even admitting that the United States were the lawful owners of the whole of Texas. Into this territory the American army having been ordered to proceed by the sole authority of the President, and being on this territory met and resisted by a Mexican military force, the Congress of the United States, by the act of 13th May last, declared that war actually existed between Mexico and the United States, and made provision for its prosecution.

Now, in the judgment of this Convention, it is plain that this war had its origin in an illegal and unjustifiable act of the President of the United States. No act of Congress and no treaty had established the Rio Grande as the boundary of Texas. The country between that river and the Nueces had always been claimed by Mexico — was still claimed by her, and was in her actual possession. The ordering of the

American army into that territory was nothing less than the direct invasion of a foreign country, with which we were at peace, and against which Congress had authorized no military operations whatever — by the single act of the President.

This invasion of the territory of a foreign and friendly state, by the sole authority of the President, we cannot but regard as an act of direct and enormous usurpation, setting at naught the principal restrictions of the Constitution, and tending to establish, in the hands of the Executive, an absolute power of war.

As to the objects for which this war has been waged, the Government itself gives little or no information. Assuming the fact that, on the 13th of May, war actually existed, the Administration calls on Congress and the country for men, money, and means for prosecuting it, with no distinct avowal of the purposes to be accomplished by it, and on the accomplishment of which it is to cease. In the meantime military forces are moving in various directions into the heart of the republic of Mexico, taking possession of towns and places as they go. It becomes, therefore, a matter of the deepest national concern, to inquire and to know for what purpose this invasion is prosecuted. Is it to acquire more territory? If it be, is that territory, when acquired, to be one in which slavery is to be established? and is it then, with slavery existing in it, and as its characteristic, to form another annexation to the Union? It seems impossible that all men of sense and patriotism, of whatever party, especially in the Free States, should not press this inquiry; that they should not be startled and alarmed at the prospect before us; and that they should not, with a loud and united voice, protest against the prosecution of the war for any such purpose. And we earnestly beseech all, who are opposed to the extension of human slavery, and to the addition of further Slave States to the Union, to rouse themselves to immediate action, to forego all minor differences, to act in harmony and concert, to call the Executive Government to a strict account for the past, and by every constitutional means to prevent the further prosecution of such nefarious schemes. In the name of Liberty, in the name of Humanity, in the name of our Holy Religion, we invoke the attention of all men to this important subject; and as the sense of this Convention be it

Resolved, That the present war against Mexico originated in an illegal and unauthorized act of the President of the United States; that, so far as we have means of judging, it is now waged for conquest and the acquisition of territory, with the intent that the territory, so acquired, shall be formed into slaveholding states, and as such added to this Union; and that we hold this war, so far as it is really carried on for these purposes, to be unjustifiable and wicked; and therefore as calling for the reprobation of all true patriots and all good men.

Resolved, That the passage of the Tariff bill of 1846, adopting new and vicious principles in our Revenue system, is a portentous experiment, threatening disturbance and injury to the great interests of the country.

Resolved, That from the first establishment of the Federal govern-

ment, two principles have been embodied in our Revenue laws; the first, that as far as practicable, all duties should be specific, as most simple in collection and most secure against fraud; the other, a discrimination in the rates of duty, with a view to foster and protect the industry of the country, and to invite capital into the establishment of manufactures. These principles, distinctly recognized in the first act of Congress, in 1789, more fully developed in 1816, and in subsequent acts of legislation, were fully consummated in the act of 1842; an act, which, moderating and reducing the protective duties of the act of 1832, (an act receiving the sanction of nearly the entire Democracy of the country) was prepared with more labor and care, it is believed, than had been bestowed on any previous revenue law.

Resolved, That under this system, the whole country has prospered in a degree which has no parallel in the history of nations. Whilst the western wilderness has been giving place to cultivation and civilization, the older states have been transplanting and establishing the arts and manufactures of Europe, thus converting the whole country into a scene of active industry, in which diversified labor, mutually exchanging its products on terms of equality, realizes a remuneration and reward wholly unknown in the overpeopled countries of the old world.

Resolved, That we deprecate the changes introduced by the Tariff of 1846, for the following reasons: We deprecate the change from specific to ad valorem duties, as affording increased facilities to fraud, as setting aside the light of all experience, and the opinions of all commercial men. We deprecate it as a revenue measure, inasmuch as it reduces the revenue upwards of five millions of dollars, on the average importation of the last three years, whilst our war expenditures require a great increase of revenue, and are actually met by an increase of debt in the issue of treasury notes. We deprecate the principles of attempting to provide for this deficiency, by an increased importation of productions to come in competition with our own, displacing and paralyzing to an equal extent our own industry, and eventually producing a general reduction in the wages of labor. We further deprecate the principle of increasing the importation of foreign manufactures, always tending to excess, and to causing the exportation of specie in return, the fruitful source of derangement in our currency, and of embarrassment in all branches of trade and industry. We deprecate this sudden change, as wantonly sporting with the interests of capital invested under the implied pledge of government for its continued protection. But we deprecate it far more, as wantonly sacrificing the interests of labor, by opening upon it the foreign competition of the under-fed and over-worked labor of Europe, the avowed purpose of the new policy. We deprecate it as the result of Executive dictation, and stringent party discipline, adopted under the coercion of a minority, without examination and without discussion, against the sober judgment of a majority of both houses of Congress.

Resolved, That the allegation that the protective system favors capital more than labor, is equally contradictory to every sound principle

of political economy, to all experience, and to common sense. Whilst capital is considered necessary to set labor in motion, it is an admitted principle that there is a uniform tendency, in capital employed in different pursuits, to an equalization of profits through a free competition. Whilst other propositions are disputed, this is never contested. It is confirmed by all our experience. Every branch of manufacture which has been successful, has been subjected to occasional checks and embarrassments, through over action. The prosperity which has followed the establishment of the tariff of 1842, has led to new construction and new expenditures in all branches of industry, beyond any former precedent. In fact, we are told by the friends of the administration, as if in double mockery of their own reasoning and our own apprehensions, that the *manufacturer has more to fear from home competition and over-production, than from any foreign competition which can reach him under the present tariff.* It is, in fact, obvious to the most simple understanding, that the investment of capital in works which can only be made productive by the employment of many hands is putting capital in the power of labor, rather than in a position to control it.

Resolved, That the assertion so oft repeated, that the tariff of 1842 has operated as an unequal tax upon the laboring classes in the manufactures consumed by them, is wholly destitute of truth. Our application of manufacturing industry has always been made in the first instance to those productions requiring little labor in proportion to the raw material.

In these the success has been greatest, and it is notorious that in the manufacture of cotton, wool, leather, hats, &c., the common articles used by the laboring classes, are produced at prices which may defy all foreign competition. Even the cotton minimum, the object of so much undeserved obloquy, is well known to be all but nominal in respect to the lower branches of the manufacture, and that its only actual effect was to levy a high duty in its higher branches on what may well be termed luxuries.

Resolved, That while the loss of capital by this change of system is sudden and determinate, the effect upon labor will be a continuous, wasting disease, with no remedy, but the retracing our steps.

Resolved, That the high reward of labor in all its branches is the peculiar advantage of our country — is intimately connected with the general diffusion of education and intelligence, and is the best security for the permanence of our free institutions. The protective system acts as the proper guardian of this boon.

Resolved, That while we welcome and approve the repeal of the British Corn Laws, as a concession and benefit to the depressed labor of England by increasing its means of subsistence, the government is acting a very different part towards our own labor, in opening its products to a free competition with those of the underpaid laborers of Europe.

Resolved, That the principle of free trade advocated by the modern economists of Europe is founded on a state of society essentially different from our own. It contemplates labor in excess, content with a bare subsistence and with no hope of improving its condition. It

regards only the profits of capital. With us labor is active in accumulation for itself, going hand in hand with capital and requiring especially the shield of the protective system against foreign interference.—Therefore *Resolved*, That it is the duty of the Whig party and of all friends of their country to urge upon Congress the duty of revising and modifying the existing tariff of 1846, so that it may furnish revenue sufficient for the wants of the government and re-establishing the principle of specific duties in all practicable cases, and of discrimination in the rates of duty with a view to foster and protect the industry of the country in all its branches.

Resolved, That whilst Massachusetts is deeply interested in the protection of her capital and her labor devoted to manufacturing and the mechanic arts, it is a great mistake, propagated for party purposes, and received by a too easy credulity, that protection is a local or partial policy.

We esteem it a policy equally favorable to every part of the country and to all the States of the Union.

Resolved, That the people of this Commonwealth and of all the United States may well be congratulated on the peaceful and honorable settlement of the controversy with England respecting the Oregon territory.

Such a settlement is in accordance with the spirit of the age — it is becoming to two great and powerful nations; which could not have adjusted such a controversy by war, without guilt on one side or the other, as well as an incalculable amount of suffering and bloodshed on both.

For this happy termination of a long standing national difficulty, the country is mainly indebted to the Senate of the United States. The adjustment has been no work of the present Administration. In his inaugural message, in March, 1845, Mr. Polk declared the right of the United States to the whole of Oregon to be clear and indisputable. He, nevertheless, entered into a correspondence on the subject with the British Minister at Washington, but in August of that year the correspondence was broken off, the American offers were retracted, and the whole matter was thrown back upon Mr. Polk's inaugural declaration that our title to the whole of Oregon was clear and indisputable. After this, two friendly offers of arbitration, made by the British Minister to the American Government were rejected by the Administration; and here terminated all and singular the labors and efforts of the Administration to bring about the settlement of the Oregon question. From that time forward, it made not one step towards such settlement — it made no new offer to Great Britain — it made no offer of reference — it invited no new discussion of terms; but the President, having recommended to Congress the discontinuance of the joint occupation of that territory then subsisting under the authority of treaties, Congress took occasion to discuss the question, to inquire into the respective rights of the parties, and to suggest proper ground for terminating the controversy by a partition of the territory.

It is needless now to refer to those discussions, although the country

will never forget the prudence, temper, and ability with which they were conducted by many members, especially in the Senate. These discussions showed to England what manner of adjustment was practicable; and the English Government, with this view of things before it, made a proposition which the Senate advised the President to accept; although, as he stated, if left to himself, he would have rejected it.

The President, therefore, had nothing to do, and did do nothing in the matter, but to give his assent to a proposition, which the Senate had before recommended. So that this treaty assumes the singular character of having been in fact negotiated by the Senate, and only assented to by the President.

The Whig Senators of the United States, and those honorable men of the other party, who acted with them, are entitled to the warmest thanks of the people of the country, for their able and successful efforts in thus settling, peaceably and honorably, the only remaining controversy between the United States and Great Britain.

Resolved, That the people of Massachusetts have witnessed with pleasure and patriotic pride the able and devoted efforts and labors of their Representatives in both Houses of Congress, during the late important and arduous session, and that those Representatives are entitled to a high degree of gratitude and respect from their constituents, and from the country.

Resolved, That while the Whigs of Massachusetts have at all times observed with interest, admiration, and pride, the entire public life and services of Daniel Webster, they have observed with peculiar pride, with heightened admiration, and with a more affectionate interest, his position and course during the last session of Congress — that with exultation, but without surprise, they have seen him stand unharmed by the shafts of malice, and converting the assaults of detraction into an opportunity of glory — that he has vindicated, to the conviction of every just mind, one of the great acts of his life, the negotiation of the Treaty of Washington, and the correspondence connected with it, on the subject of maritime rights and the impressment of American seamen. So that there now no longer remains a doubt that, in the words of that correspondence, 'in every regularly documented American vessel, the crew who navigate it will find their protection in the flag which is over them' — that his ardent love of country, his enlarged statesmanship, and his unbending republicanism, are worthy of all honor, gratitude and trust — and that we avail ourselves of this first general assembling of the Whigs of Massachusetts, since the close of the last session of Congress, to record these deliberate opinions and these cherished feelings, and to avow our conviction that, at no distant day, the people of the country will take the vindication of his fame and the reward of his labors into their own hands.

Resolved, That among the most surprising events of the last session of Congress, are the President's two vetos, one of the Harbor bill, and the other of a bill indemnifying the sufferers by French spoliations prior to 1800. It is no unusual occurrence in human events, nor an

uncommon feature in human character, that rashness is attempted to be passed off for resolution, and violence for strength. The veto power was lodged in the President by the constitution, to be exercised only on high and solemn occasions, when such exercise might be deemed indispensably necessary to preserve the constitution itself from invasion, to avert an open and imminent danger, or to arrest some sudden act of legislation, which might threaten pernicious and irremediable consequences. The framers of the constitution took it for granted, that the office of President would always be filled by characters of great distinction, eminent talents, long experience in public affairs, and possessing the assured confidence of the community. In such hands it was thought the veto power might be safe — safe against frequent and daily use, safe against party influence and party purposes, safe at least against open and flagrant abuse. But, in these recent instances, it would seem that the President of the United States considers himself, by virtue of the veto power, as another branch of the Legislature, with as general a right to concur or non-concur in proposed measures of legislation, as is possessed by the Senate or House of Representatives.

It is true, that in one of these vetos, that applied to the Harbor Bill, he undertakes to place his objection on constitutional grounds; but they are such grounds as have been discussed, and considered, and refuted time and again. There is no one provision in the Harbor Bill, thus negatived by the President, the principle of which has not been sanctioned by every predecessor in the office which he holds, from Washington's time down to the time of James K. Polk. What certainty can there be, or what stability in government, if individual opinions, or individual preferences, may at any time be set up, not only against both Houses of Congress, but against the constant practice of the government from its foundation.

In this veto of the Harbor Bill we see evidences of self-respect, such as in other cases would surprise mankind. When nominated for the Presidency by a party convention, to the surprize of a great portion of the party itself, as well as to the astonishment of the country, Mr. James K. Polk was wholly unknown to a great majority of the people of the United States. He had never been in men's minds for any such distinction. He had been a member of Congress, respectable, but not eminent nor distinguished. He was a lawyer in Tennessee, of respectable practice, no doubt, but wholly unknown in the National Courts, and having had no habits nor principles fitting him, in any singular degree, for the discussion or decision of great Constitutional questions, yet in the strength of his own opinion, and for reasons, which, as stated by himself, hardly aspire to the dignity of respectable argument, he negatives solemn acts, passed by both Houses of Congress, containing no principle nor any constitutional construction, which had not been approved by Washington and Jefferson, Marshall and Madison, and sanctioned and acted on by all preceding administrations.

Now what can more seriously impair the value of the National

Constitution, or diminish the regard which good men are disposed to feel for it, than to admit, or to be obliged to perceive, that no length of practical interpretation, no series of acts of legislation, no authority of judicature, and no general sense and understanding of the country can preserve its provisions against the innovations of merely personal opinions and rash disregard of all authority, all precedents, and all other men's judgments?

Mr. Polk's second veto was imposed upon the bill for indemnifying those of our citizens, who were supposed to have just claims upon the government, founded in this, viz: that having had just claims for spoiliations on the government of France, the government of the United States, by agreement with France, released her from all these claims, on condition that France, on her part, would release the government of the United States from certain burdensome treaty stipulations, which had been at an early day entered into. Congress thought this a clear case of taking private property for public use, and therefore a clear case for indemnity to the owners of the property. They therefore passed a bill for this purpose, and this bill Mr. James K. Polk negatived. It would be useless to consider his reasons; they are all either unfounded in fact or inconclusive, and some of them frivolous, in argument. His message shows that he did not understand the case — yet he put his veto on the bill, not on any constitutional ground, but merely on his own opinion of the policy and propriety of the measure. Such is the President, whom party, in its recklessness, has placed at the head of the government of the United States!!

Resolved, therefore, That these vetos of the President were wholly uncalled for and improper — are at war with the spirit of the Constitution, and tend to establish a practice, the effect of which must be to give to the Executive Chief Magistrate a supreme control over the whole legislation of the country.

Resolved, That the true remedy for this growing and most alarming evil is, not in attempting to alter the Constitution, but in the election of such persons, and such persons only, to the Presidency, as understand that sacred instrument, as have given evidence of being imbued with its principles, and are ready at all times to obey it and to be governed by it, in the spirit and in the letter, as it is received by the country, and as it has been understood and administered by the wise and the good men, who have gone before us.

Resolved, That it is the bounden constitutional duty of Congress to make just appropriations, out of the National Treasury, for all necessary improvement and preservation of the harbors on the Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico, for the greater facility and convenience of commerce; and in like manner to construct and improve harbors and places of refuge on the lakes, for the better preservation of men's lives and property; and to clear the great rivers of the West from whatever obstructs their navigation. And that the Whigs of Massachusetts will cheerfully concur, under a wise and prudent administration, such as shall not be given to the policy of vetos, narrow discriminations and miserable quibbles and absurdities, in effecting all great useful and necessary objects of this kind, in all parts of the Union.

Resolved, That the passage of the Sub-Treasury law, if it be intended that it shall be executed, is a gross wrong to the foreign and domestic trade of the country, and if it is intended to be evaded by the agents of the government, it is a political fraud upon the people of the country.

Resolved, That the Whigs of Massachusetts regard slavery as a great moral, political, and social evil, and they therefore pledge themselves to present as firm a front of opposition to the institution of slavery as is consistent with our allegiance to the constitution, and our duties as members of the confederacy.

Resolved, That the Whigs of Massachusetts will continue to use all constitutional and proper means to restrain the already preponderating influence of slaveholding interests in the national legislation, to defeat all measures calculated to uphold slavery, and promote all constitutional measures for its overthrow, and will oppose at all times, with uncompromising zeal and firmness, any further addition of slaveholding States to this Union, out of whatever territory formed; and that they will in like manner oppose all further extension of the slavery of the African race on this continent. If, under the government of Providence, it shall happen that portions of this continent, not belonging to the United States, shall be settled by the Saxon race, let those settlers carry with them, wherever they go, together with their own free blood, the blessings of free government and free institutions for all, and chains and fetters for none. Wherever our language is hereafter to be spoken, our history remembered, our example quoted, or our kindred acknowledged, there let universal freedom and equal laws be proclaimed to man.

Resolved, As the settled and deep conviction of this Convention, that the principles of the Whig party of the United States are the true principles of the Constitution, and those only upon which it can be successfully administered; that they are the principles of the Fathers of the Revolution and the founders of the government; the principles of Washington's administration — principles, the adherence to which has never failed to carry the country forward, in its march of honor and prosperity, and any occasional departure from which has uniformly embarrassed and retarded its progress.

The present is a moment which calls for a renewed assertion of these principles, and for their support and maintenance by all patriots and enlightened men. And, in the judgement of this Convention, the true interests of the people imperatively require that the great Whig party should be maintained in its integrity and upon its own true basis, without sub-division of a local or any other kind.

We look to no great good as likely to be accomplished, except through the agency of the Whigs of the United States, acting as the Whigs of the United States. There must always be some questions on which all the individual members of a great party, spread over a vast country, cannot entirely concur. But it is as certain as any other historical fact, that local differences and local prejudices are giving way, and that more and more of union and harmony, among true men of all sections of our common country, and on some of the greatest and most

important questions of public policy, is daily manifesting itself. This is remarkably true of the protective policy; it is true, also, of the great questions appertaining to Peace and War, and the general policy of our foreign relations. And while there are, at the same time, other subjects upon which wide differences exist, which we, as Massachusetts Whigs, most seriously lament, still from any evils springing or likely to spring from this source, where are we to look with any well founded hope for a remedy out of the ranks of the Whig party, or in any combinations formed in opposition to the great Whig party.

We see no foundation for relief or redress in the formation of new parties or the prospect of local combinations. The people of Massachusetts feel it, and justly feel it, to have been a great and enormous wrong to have annexed another slaveholding state to the Union, as was done in the case of Texas. They protested against it from the beginning to the end; as they will protest against, and to the utmost of their power, oppose any similar annexation. But it is certain, nevertheless, that Texas was not annexed by sectional strength or sectional influence alone. The North as well as the South had a hand in it. The Whigs both of the South and the North opposed it. The self-styled Democratic party both of the South and the North supported it. The two great Atlantic free states by Democratic votes were for it — Connecticut gave one of her votes for it — New Hampshire gave all her votes for it, and Maine, which is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, also gave votes for it, without which it could not have been accomplished. And we are obliged to confess, with shame and mortification, that even in Massachusetts herself there have been, and there are, Texas and pro-Slavery partizans, and Texas and pro-Slavery presses. Whatever pretences these partizans and these presses set up from time to time, yet, whenever the time comes they act for the extension of slavery in fact. We cannot look, therefore, to any local or sectional combinations, or influences, for security. We know, at this moment, that just so far as New England is Whig, her voice is with the majority of the people of Massachusetts, and just so far as New England is Democratic, her voice is against that of the majority of the people of Massachusetts.

As little can we look with hope to new and subordinate divisions and organizations. Our experience, in this respect, ought to satisfy every real patriot and every honest man. That experience is lamentable enough. In the Presidential election of 1844 the annexation of Texas formed a leading topic. The Whigs every where opposed it; the candidate of their opponents was publicly pledged to it. It was as demonstrable as any such thing could be, that nothing but the success of the Whig cause could prevent it. Yet a third party, called the Liberty party, and claiming for itself exclusively an abhorrence of slavery, and organized on that single idea, was in the field with a few thousand votes. It was shown, clearly and palpably, that if the Whigs succeeded, Texas could not be annexed. The members of this party were admonished, besought, implored not to defeat that success by voting, uselessly at best, for a candidate of their own. But they did so vote, and by so voting, they in effect gave the vote of New York to Mr.

Polk — that vote secured Mr. Polk's election, and Mr. Polk's election at once brought Texas into the Union, slavery and all. History will record, that the triumph of the Whigs of the North and of the South would have kept Texas out of the Union; and that the Liberty party, by acting under a separate organization, really annexed Texas to the United States. These occurrences, and others like them, ought to make a deep and lasting impression on the minds of such men as are really, sincerely, and conscientiously lovers of human liberty.

The Whigs do not desire to restrain or to control men in the exercise of the right of suffrage; every man is free to vote as he chooses; but it must be evident to all, that the organization of a third party in opposition to the Whigs has thus far had no effect but to insure the defeat of those great ends, which that third party profess to have in view. Wilberforce and Clarkson and their associates did not act thus in bringing the political power of the state to decree the abolition of the slave trade, or the emancipation of the slaves in the colonies. How much wiser would it now be that these examples should be followed, and that those most devoted to the great interests of humanity should remain united with persons, who hold the like general sentiments, instead of indirectly but effectually co-operating with a party which is equally at war with both.

The Liberty Party, formed mainly from the Whig, and agreeing with the Whig, on all national political questions, and, in the main, on all questions touching human freedom, yet in the exercise of the elective franchise, seem to shut their eyes to the fact that the party of the Northern Democracy is a party which professes to do nothing and to care nothing for human liberty, and the general policy of which is, in other respects, in the judgment of the members of the Liberty Party itself, a policy which retards, instead of advancing, the public prosperity.

We come back, then, to the sentiment expressed in the early part of this resolution, and after mature reflection on the past, and a full contemplation of the future, we are fully persuaded that it is to the integrity of the Whig party, and to the success of the Whig cause, and to them alone, that we must look for any important good, which we desire to obtain, for the interests of the country or the interests of humanity.

Resolved, That the Whigs of Massachusetts congratulate their brethren in New Hampshire and Maine, on their recent triumphs, and that they look with pleasure and confidence to the time when on all great questions interesting to humanity, to national honor and national interests, all New England shall be of one heart and one mind; and when northern subserviency, called elsewhere 'the patriotism of northern Democracy,' shall be heard of no more.

Resolved, That it is the duty of the Whigs of Massachusetts to adhere to their principles without doubt or wavering, to support those public measures which they have hitherto supported, and to oppose those which they have hitherto opposed; to do their utmost to bring about a wise, able, and impartial administration of the general government, to maintain their ascendancy at home, and to this end to give, at the ensuing election, a manly and vigorous support to the nominations this day made.

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES HUDSON.

I should do great injustice to my own feelings did I not in the first instant, make my grateful acknowledgments to the gentlemen here assembled for the unexpected call which they have made upon me to preside over their deliberations on this occasion. To stand in this place, a place which has been filled by the brightest scholars, the wisest statesmen and the purest patriots of which this Commonwealth can boast, I regard as no ordinary mark of distinction. But while I see before me and around me gentlemen much older and wiser than myself, gentlemen whose public services, and abilities to fill this place are known to you all, I acknowledge that I feel a degree of diffidence and embarrassment. But, fellow-citizens, I stand before an assembly of the Whigs of Massachusetts, gentlemen who have come up with higher purpose to this consecrated Hall than to criticise the well meant efforts of their friends and co-laborers.

I regard the present as one of the most important, and at the same time one of the most alarming, eras in the history of our country. Within a few years past, the entire policy of this country seems to have undergone a radical change. Our fathers, who adopted the Constitution under which we have enjoyed unexampled prosperity, adopted this Constitution for the purpose of securing to us and our posterity the blessings of freedom — and our maxim from the first has been "Peace with all nations — entangling alliances with none." But it seems that now this established policy has been changed. Within a short period we have witnessed the annexation to this country of a large tract of foreign territory, and members from that territory, not possessing the constitutional qualification of citizens of the United States for a suitable length of time, have taken their seats, without opposition, in both branches of our Congress.

Six months ago we were at peace with all the world, but now we are engaged in an unnatural war — commenced, not by the authority of the war-making power, but without any legal authority, and in opposition to one of the fundamental principles of the charter of our rights. This, a war of conquest, of colonization, was unquestionably commenced — and is at the present moment prosecuted — for the purpose of dismembering Mexico, that a portion of her territory may be received into this Union, in order to give the slave power of the South a perpetual preponderancy in our national legislation.

We have been told by the present national administration that the Government owes no duty to the citizens. Although the nation was at war, (a war which has already cost the country thirty millions of dollars,) although the national administration had wantonly plunged the country into this war, instead of preparing for this emergency, instead of furnishing a revenue for this purpose, it came in at that time and under all those circumstances, and so reduced the rate of duty as to deprive the government

of a revenue, cutting it short unquestionably some six or eight millions of dollars.

It would be out of place for me to attempt to mention all the grievances of which the Whigs have cause to complain. We have seen a war against the currency of this country. While the government is favoring the issue of a paper currency, they require that all monies due to the government shall be paid — not in circulating medium, but in the precious metals. We have seen an alarming exercise of the veto power, upon questions, not of necessity, but of expediency.

These are some of the wrongs which the Whig party have met at this time, in part, at least, to redress. What course shall we pursue? What measures shall we adopt to remove these evils? In the first place, it is perfectly obvious that union is necessary for success in this case. If harmony does not prevail in our counsels, and union in the broader field of action, our efforts will not be successful. If we fall out with old and tried friends, instead of making a common effort to meet a common enemy, our success, I fear, will be doubtful, at least. But I trust that a better spirit will prevail, and that the Whigs will coöperate — that when they shall be called to action we shall find them together on one common ground; and, acting thus, there can be no doubt of their success in this Commonwealth, and I hope throughout the country.

We are a conservative class. We profess to be governed by the Constitution and by the laws of the land. We cannot, it is true, abolish the institution of slavery in the states where it is beyond our control. But we can say effectually to that institution, as Jehovah said to the ocean of old, 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid;' and no lover of our institutions, no friend of the Constitution, North or South, East or West, has any cause to object to this course. We abide by the spirit of the Constitution and so far as it contains guaranties, those guaranties we hold sacred, until the instrument shall be amended; but when asked to go further than this, and asked to build up and sustain an institution which our fathers merely tolerated, we ought to say that we will give no countenance to such a measure, and that slavery shall not be extended over a solitary foot of ground where it does not already exist. Whigs of Massachusetts, do your duty, and the force of your example will be felt elsewhere, and I trust that the day is not far distant, when this evil will be forever put away from the midst of this people.

SPEECH OF

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER.

Mr. Chairman and Fellow-Citizens:

I deem it a great piece of good fortune to be for a few moments in so large a body of the Representatives of the Whigs of Massachusetts. Wherever they are assembled, there is an odor of liberty about them that I love to inhale. There is an avowed attachment to liberty, and to the institutions of their fathers, that warms a heart not now indeed youthful, but which does not yet cease to beat in accordance with everything favorable to the progress of human liberty either at home or abroad.

Gentlemen, of such a party as the Whig party, composed of intelligent, honest, patriotic and conscientious men and masses of men, it is not to be supposed or expected, that on all great questions of public interest, and the subordinate divisions of those questions, it should be entirely unanimous; but experience shows that without an absolute unanimity, a community of feeling and a community of purpose brings about a co-operation which is necessary both for action and result. There are important topics, in relation to which gentlemen here present, whom I hold high in my regard, and warm in my affection, differ from me; and as to which they see a line of duty not apparent to me. Others may look to other sources, or rely upon other foundations for their hopes of the country; but I confess, sir, that at this period of my political life, — not now an early one, I am full of the feeling that there is but one ground upon which the good men of this country can rest their trust. I see in the dark and troubled night which is now upon us, no star above the horizon, but the intelligent, patriotic, *united* Whig party of the United States.

Gentlemen of the Convention, the hour of your separation has arrived, and I will not detain you. I rejoice with you in the general unanimity which has characterized your proceedings. I partake in the happiness you feel in the prospect of re-electing the tried candidates for the Executive offices of the State, whom you have this day re-nominated; and of maintaining the general supremacy of Whig policy in the Commonwealth. I rejoice with you in the hope of obtaining the power to arrest whatever threatens to extend slavery, or to mar the industrial pursuits of our people. I rejoice with you in every anticipation of success and prosperity in which we are allowed to indulge, and I agree with you in believing that there is nothing that can promote the cause of happiness and liberty, in the present state of political affairs, but the firm maintenance of the Whig principles which Massachusetts has so long sustained. Gentlemen, I am thankful to you for every token of your kind and respectful regard, and take leave of you by sincerely wishing that the harmony of the Whig party, which has been evinced here tonight, may lead to its usual consummation, — great and entire success.

SPEECH OF
HON. R. C. WINTHROP.

I should have preferred on many accounts, Mr. President, to remain still longer a listener on this occasion, and to postpone until a later hour, if not altogether, any remarks of my own. But I cannot hesitate to respond, without further delay, to the unequivocal and cordial summons which has now been made upon me. Indeed, sir, I am proud to participate, at any time, and in ever so humble a way, in the proceedings of such a meeting as I see before me. The mere presence at it, to those who have been so lately and so long confined to far other company, is a privilege which you and I, at least, know how to appreciate. I rejoice to see once more the faces of so many true-hearted Whigs of Massachusetts; — faces, not a few of which have been familiar to me in other years, and in other fields of public or political service; — faces, all of which I may greet as the faces of friends, if there be anything of truth in the saying of the great Roman orator, that one of the strongest bonds of human friendship is, 'to think alike concerning the Republic.'

Nor, sir, can I find it in my heart to regret that this Convention is assembled *here;* in this city, covered with the memorials of the patriotism of the fathers, and of the philanthropy and munificence of their sons; and in this hall, devoted, from the first, to human liberty, and whose echoes are ever true to the cause to which it was consecrated. And not of liberty alone, much less of Boston alone, or of Massachusetts alone, do these venerated columns, or yonder votive canvass speak to us, but of 'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.'

We meet this day, Mr. President and gentlemen, under circumstances of more than ordinary interest. Rarely, if ever, have so many momentous issues been presented at once to our consideration. When we were assembled in this hall last year, the administration, against whose accession to power we had so vigorously but so vainly struggled, had but just entered on the threshold of their career. Their principles and purposes had only found expression on paper or in words; — in the resolutions of some Baltimore Convention, in the manifestoes of some mass meeting, or in the hardly more dignified phrases of an Inaugural Message. We had, then, some reason, or at least some room, for hoping, that their practice might fall short of their professions; that their bite might be less bad than their bark; that they might not be quite willing, or if willing, not quite able, to carry out to their full consummation the plans they had so boldly avowed.

A year of action has since ensued; a year of busy, earnest, varied, crowded action. Their whole policy has now been practically disclosed and developed. Scarce a subject in the whole wide field of national legislation has failed to receive the impression, the deep and strong impression, of their ruling hand. Questions foreign and questions domestic, questions of currency and questions of commerce, questions moral and questions material, questions of peace and questions of war, questions of labor and questions of liberty, have been drawn, with startling rapidity, within the sphere of their deliberation, and have received the unequivocal stamp of their decision.

Their acts are now before us. We now know them by their fruits. And it well becomes us to examine those fruits, and to see for whom they are meat, and for whom they are poison.

In pursuing such an examination ever so cursorily, Mr. President, no

man who hears me can fail to be struck with the complete coincidence which is found, between the predictions which were pronounced by the Whig presses and the Whig speakers, two years ago, as to the consequences of Mr. Polk's election to the Presidency, and the facts as they have now occurred. A great poet tells us of —

> "Some juggling fiend, who never spoke before,
> But cries, 'I warned thee,' when the deed is o'er."

Not such are the cries, 'we warned you,' 'we warned you,' which the Whigs are now every where ringing through the land. In the columns of a hundred newspapers, at the corners of a hundred streets, the precise results which are now before us and upon us, were read or heard two years ago, in the language of prophecy, but, as it now appears, with the literal exactness of history. We may, indeed, say with him of old, not a little of whose patience we are called upon to exercise, 'the things which we greatly feared are come upon us, and that which we were afraid of is come unto us.'

I know, Mr. President, of but a single catastrophe, which was foreboded as the consequence of the defeat of our party at the last Presidential Election, which has been in any degree averted. I mean, a war with Great Britain for the Territory of Oregon. And certainly, certainly, I do not underrate the importance of this exception to the general assertion I have made. Nor would I withhold from the administration any measure of credit, which it may deserve, for having saved the country from so unspeakable a calamity. But what degree of credit does it deserve? Who can say, this day, upon his conscience, that it was by the statesmanship, by the moderation, by the wisdom, by the civilized policy and Christian principle of the President, or his cabinet, or the general mass of his supporters, that this result was accomplished? Who, on the other hand, can forget the intemperate and braggart counsels, which brought the two countries to the perilous edge of such a war as never raged before, and which were only restrained, (under God,) by the patriotic firmness and independence of half-a-dozen of the nominal friends of the Administration, seconded and sustained by the great body of the Whigs in Congress? Yes, gentlemen, the Whigs in Congress, and more particularly the Whigs of the Senate, with our own ever-honored and illustrious Daniel Webster in their front ranks, may claim the true glory of having saved the peace of the country, and of the world, in this case — and of having brought the Administration to the necessity, (I will not call it the humiliating necessity, — there is nothing humiliating in abandoning a false course, — it is the highest honor, rather, to any man or any party,) of submitting to an arrangement, to which it had rashly and recklessly declared that it never would submit!

Peace, lasting, and, I hope, eternal peace, between the United States and Great Britain, by the settlement of the only remaining disputed boundary between them — that very peace, which Shakspeare would seem to have prefigured, when he said, 'Our peace shall stand as firm as *Rocky Mountains*,' — this has been secured to us — and, for this, the Whigs in Congress, in a hopeless minority though they seemed, may claim no second or subordinate share of distinction. Had they looked only to party ends — had they been willing to embroil the country, for the purpose of embarrassing the Administration — had they acted in the spirit, which so many of their adversaries have more than once exhibited, in regard to the Ashburton Treaty—I honestly believe that war would have been as inev-

itable, even as Gen. Cass so often pronounced it. But the policy of the Whigs was PEACE; peace in this case, and peace in every other case; — and I may add, that they would have preserved it in every other case, also, had it ever depended on their voices or on their votes.

But, gentlemen, with this one exception, the whole catalogue of disastrous consequences, predicted from the election of Mr. Polk has been fulfilled to the letter.

1. The Sub-Treasury scheme, upon which the people of this country passed sentence of condemnation, in tones so emphatic and unequivocal, in 1840, has been re-established. That credit system, upon which the young and enterprising must ever depend so much for getting a start in life, and which, under wholesome regulations, is of incalculable importance to the honest industry of the people, has again been placed under the ban of the national government. From this day forth, every bank note in the land, without discrimination between the redeemable and the irredeemable, bears a government protest on its face. It may be good enough for the people, but it is not good enough for the office-holders. A new divorce has been proclaimed between the people and the government, and the decree does not contain even an allowance for *alimony*. 'Let the government take care of itself, and let the people take care of themselves,' is again practically avowed as the maxim of a self-styled Democratic administration.

It is true, gentlemen, that the administration has, at present, the hardest part of this bargain. It is clear that the government has not yet made much headway in taking care of *number one*, upon this hard money principle. Not only has the Sub-Treasury system been again ushered into existence under a salute of an issue of ten millions of treasury notes, but the Executive has notoriously been at work in manufacturing another variety of paper money, through the medium of paymasters' drafts, which is a deliberate and intentional fraud upon the whole design and object of the act. But the principle is none the better, whatever the practice may be. This government was not made to take care of itself alone; and as to the people, the best and only way in which they can take care of themselves — as I trust they will soon understand and signify — is by placing always in offices of authority and trust, men who will watch over their interests, provide for their wants, regulate their commerce, protect their labor, and carry out those great ends of common defence and general welfare, for which the Constitution was at first created.

2. In fit companionship with this act, may be placed the refusal of the administration, through a most odious exercise of the veto power, to co-operate with large majorities of Congress, in making provision for removing obstructions and improving channels in the various harbors and rivers of the Union. We of Massachusetts, gentlemen, had a particular interest in the bill which was thus wantonly defeated. The harbor on whose borders we are at this moment assembled, was deprived, by the imperious will of Mr. Polk, of an appropriation, essential, not so much to its improvement, as to its preservation, and almost to its existence. Mr. President, the day was, when no man would have dared to deny that the condition of Boston harbor was a matter of national concern. When the British government shut up Boston port by a tyrannical edict, the whole Union was roused to re-open it. When the Liberty Boys choked up the channel with British tea, that, too, was an obstruction which was not counted altogether local. Nor did it ever enter into the head of any of our Revolutionary or Constitutional fathers, to deny the nationality of so important a thoroughfare of

commerce. But other counsels have come over our rulers, and Boston and Massachusetts are almost ruled out of the national regard.

Not, however, for ourselves alone, or even most deeply, do we deplore the veto of the Harbor and River bill. We realize every day, more and more, that we have a common interest and a common destiny with the dwellers on the great lakes and rivers of the west and southwest, and our hearts are with them, in this fresh and cruel postponement of their long deferred hopes. I know of few things more justly calculated to rouse the West and North to vigorous and united political action, than their common want of a systematic prosecution of these river and harbor improvements. The newspapers informed us that the flags on the shipping of Lake Erie were displayed at half-mast, when the news of the veto reached Buffalo. And well might they be so displayed. Not a few valuable lives are to be sacrificed, not a few hardy mariners are doomed to a watery grave, by that arbitrary act. It would be but a fit mark of the national mourning and indignation at this act, if all the commercial flags of the Union, in all our ports, on all our rivers, and on all our lakes, should be displayed at half-mast, with the cause of such a proceeding briefly labelled on their folds, from this time forth, until a President should be elected who will sign the very bill which has now, for the third time, been rejected.

3. But, gentlemen, a heavier blow still has fallen on the trade and industry of the country. In conformity with our predictions, the Tariff of 1842 has been repealed, and a new one enacted in its stead. The character of this new tariff has been so ably and clearly exposed elsewhere, by those whose words are never lost on the country, that it would be a waste of time to enter here upon any elaborate analysis of its elements. This much, however, should be everywhere, and on all occasions, asserted of it. Its passage constitutes a complete *revolution* in our whole revenue and financial system. It is a measure which has no precedent in our own history, or in the history of civilized commercial countries. Its exclusive adoption of *ad valorem* duties is in direct defiance of all the example and authority of other nations, and of all our own experience. It is in this respect a mere experiment, and one which is to be wantonly tried, at the expense of the interests of morality, as well as of trade. And in other respects, even more important, it is contrary to the whole policy of our government, from the earliest day of its establishment.

Sir, the professed aim and object of this new tariff, is to eliminate from our revenue system that element of discrimination in favor of American labor, which has been intertwined with it from the 4th day of July, 1789, to the 4th day of August, 1846. Henceforth the working-man of America is to have no protection from his own government. Henceforth (if these counsels hold, as I rejoice to believe they cannot) he is to be doomed to an unaided struggle for bread, and almost for breath, with the operatives of the old world. The great free trade doctrine, that we are to 'buy where we can buy cheapest,' is to be rigorously applied to human labor, and wages are to be conformed to the standard of the cheapest markets of England, France, and Germany. Such a system as this, gentlemen, might naturally receive some countenance among those, with whom labor is associated only with the idea of degradation and bondage, and with whom the laborer himself is a thing to be bought and sold in the shambles. Though, let me do the justice to acknowledge, there are large and rapidly increasing numbers of intelligent Southern Whigs, who scorn such views as much as we do, and who appreciate, as highly as ourselves, the demands of the free labor of the country. But how such a system should

receive the support of Northern and Western men, except upon the merest and most unworthy political and party grounds, is a matter past all comprehension. Yet so it is; and New York, New Hampshire, Ohio, Indiana, and other free states, are jointly responsible with Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi and Alabama, for the passage of the Tariff of 1846. Sir, I will extenuate nothing of the bad influences of Southern institutions. If railing against them would annihilate them, I would touch no other theme, even to the going down of the sun. But neither will I set down aught in malice. And it cannot be denied, that not a few of the Northern, Eastern and Western states must be regenerated, before we can justly lay the whole abomination of this system at the doors of slavery.

Gentlemen, *party* has done this work. The self-styled Democracy of the country pledged itself long ago to its accomplishment, and has now fulfilled its pledges, in spite of all personal convictions. Where was there a voice raised in full, cordial, unequivocal approbation of this new tariff? No where on this side of the Atlantic. No where within the wide-spread limits of our own Republic. When Senators were called on to explain and defend the details of the new system, they all with one consent began to make excuses, or else stood mute. One resigned, rather than vote for it. Another was gazetted as having attempted to run away, rather than vote for it. Mr. Benton admitted that he dared not look at what he was doing. Mr. Calhoun, even, was understood to have expressed the strongest misgivings as to its present policy. The casting vote was given at one stage by a Vice President, and at another by an instructed Whig, (I wish he had been better instructed) who both acknowledged their personal judgments to be against the measure. No, gentlemen, the voices that hail the passage of this Democratic Tariff come all from beyond the seas. The only endorsement of the Report on which it was based, was from the Parliament of Great Britain, and almost the only rejoicings at its passage are from the people of Great Britain. And well it may be so. So far as commerce and trade are concerned, it goes far to re-establish the old colonial relations between us. They are henceforth, as in the days before the Revolution, to take our raw materials, or such of them as they cannot get cheaper elsewhere, and to send them back to us with their own skill and industry added to them. As for own labor, it may hew wood, and draw water, and whistle for a living.

There are other views of this measure, of deep national concern. It will be destructive of revenue. It will involve us in a national debt. It will bring upon us the necessity of direct taxation. But these, in my judgment, are trifles light as air, compared with its influence on the destinies of American labor.

Read, Mr. President, the account of English labor recently furnished us by your own amiable and excellent fellow-citizen, of Worcester county, Elihu Burritt. Go with him into the work-shop of the British blacksmith. See the father working 'from 4 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night to earn eighteen pence'—'his wages averaging only about seven shillings a week,' and that to support a 'family of five.' See his eldest boy of only nine years of age, cut off from all opportunity, alike of intellectual or physical expansion, with no food for the mind, and not enough for the body, working wearily by his side, to eke out the number of nails *per diem*, which is to secure them all from starvation. Hear the father lamenting, that he had no time or means to teach his children to read the Testament, the only book which he had ever seen himself, or which he seemed to care to have them see!

And this is the sort of labor, with which, (according to the resolutions of the Democratic Convention held in this Hall last week) it is an insult to suggest, that the American operative is not able and ready to compete successfuly! Is it not plain, that if the American operative is to compete with it successfully and without protection, it must be by submitting to these same deprivations and hardships? And are our laborers to work eighteen hours for eighteen pence? Is seven shillings a week the Democratic standard of sufficiency, for a laborer's family of five? And are the children of our American laborers to be doomed to toil by their father's side, from nine years old and upwards, shut out from all opportunity of being taught even to read the Testament?

What is to become of the Manhood, the Education, the Morality, the Religion, the Liberty of this Country — for they are all bound up in one bundle of life together — when such a state of things shall exist among us? Where would have been our blacksmiths' boys, if it had existed heretofore? Not traveling in Europe, like Elihu Burritt, able to read the Testament in a hundred tongues. Not governing Massachusetts, with admirable ability and discretion, like George N. Briggs. Sir, in every view of Philanthropy, Morality, Humanity, Republicanism, Liberty, it is of an importance which cannot be over-stated, that the wages of labor should be kept from falling to the English or the European standard. And to this end, there must be protection, discrimination, or whatever else you choose to call it. We care not about words, but things. We do not stickle about the precise provisions of the Tariff of '42. But the Whigs of the Union will, I trust, leave no step untaken, and no stone unturned, to restore to our Revenue system that great principle of discrimination in favor of American labor, which our fathers established, as among the first and best fruits of their revolutionary success — and which has now for the first time in our history, been totally discarded.

4. I come, Mr. President, to a brief notice of the last, but by no means the least momentous, fulfilment of the Whig predictions of 1844. It was the distinct declaration of all the Whig organs, during the last Presidential canvass, that the annexation of Texas would involve this nation in war with Mexico. And it has done so.

I do not forget that, in regard to some incidental questions connected with this war, there have been differences of opinion among friends at home, and differences of votes among friends at Washington. Upon these topics of controversy, however, I do not intend to touch. If anybody has come here, either by direct expression or by covert allusion, to cast imputations, to provoke collisions, or to stir up strife, I pass him by, with whatever respect other people may think him entitled to. We have come here, sir, to remember our agreements and not our differences. We have come here to reconcile all differences, and to do what we can to sustain and advance our common principles and our common objects. Let me only say, that, if the differences among Whigs here, be no wider than those among Whigs at Washington, on this subject, a reconciliation will require but little expenditure either of time or words. You and I, sir, certainly, when we came to different conclusions as to our duty, on a memorable occasion, never imagined that we were parting company for an instant, either as true Whigs, or as true friends of peace on the one side, or true defenders of the country on the other. Much less did we dream, that we were forfeiting any thing of our mutual respect and confidence. Nor have we done so.

Sir, upon all the great points of this question, there is no difference of opinion whatever. All agree, that this war ought never to have been commenced. All agree, that it ought to be brought to a close, at the earliest practicable moment. No man present denies that it originated, primarily, in the annexation of Texas; and, secondarily, in the marching of the American army into the disputed territory beyond the Nueces. And no man present fails to deplore, and to condemn, both of these measures. Nor is there a Whig in this assembly, nor, in my opinion, a Whig throughout the Union, who does not deprecate, from the bottom of his heart, any prosecution of this war, for the purpose of aggression, invasion, or conquest.

This, this is the matter, gentlemen, in which we take the deepest concern this day. *Where, when, is this war to end, and what are to be its fruits?* Unquestionably, we are not to forget, that it takes two to make a bargain. Unquestionably, we are not to forget, that Mexico must be willing to negotiate, before our own government can be held wholly responsible for the failure of a treaty of peace. I rejoice, for one, that the administration have shown what little readiness they have shown, for

bringing the war to a conclusion. I have given them credit elsewhere, for their original overtures last autumn; and I shall not deny them whatever credit they deserve for their renewed overtures now. But, Mr. President, it is not every thing which takes the name or the form of an overture of peace, which is entitled to respect as such. If it proposes unjust and unreasonable terms; if it manifests an overbearing and oppressive spirit; if it presumes on the power of those who make it, or on the weakness of those to whom it is offered, to exact hard and heartless conditions; if, especially, it be of a character at once offensive and injurious to the rights of one of the nations concerned, and to the principles of a large majority of the other; then it prostitutes the name of peace, and its authors are only entitled to the contempt which belongs to those who add hypocrisy to injustice.

Mr. President, when the President of the United States, on a sudden and serious emergency, demanded of Congress the means of meeting a war, into which he had already plunged the country, he pledged himself, in thrice repeated terms, to be ready at all times to settle the existing disputes between us and Mexico, whenever Mexico should be willing either to make, or to receive, propositions to that end. To that pledge he stands solemnly recorded in the sight of God and of men. Now, sir, it was no part of our existing disputes, at that time, whether we should have possession of California, or of any other territory beyond the Rio Grande. And the President, in prosecuting plans of invasion and conquest, which look to the permanent acquisition of any such territories, will be as false to his own pledges, as he is to the honor and interests of his country.

I believe that I speak the sentiments of the whole people of Massachusetts — I know I speak my own, in saying that we want no more territorial possessions, to become the nurseries of new slave states. It goes hard enough with us, that the men and money of the nation should be employed for the defence of such acquisitions, already made; but to originate new enterprizes for extending the area of slavery by force of arms, is revolting to the moral sense of every American freeman.

Sir, I trust there is no man here, who is not ready to stand by the constitution of the country. I trust there is no man here who is not willing to hold fast to the union of the States, be its limits ultimately fixed a little on one side, or a little on the other side, of the line of his own choice. For myself, I will not contemplate the idea of the disssolution of the Union, in any conceivable event. There are no boundaries of sea or land, of rock or river, of desert or mountain, to which I will not try, at least, to carry out my love of country, whenever they shall really be the boundaries of my country. If the day of dissolution ever comes, it shall bring the evidence of its own irresistible necessity with it. I avert my eyes from all recognition of such a necessity in the distance. Nor am I ready for any political organizations or platforms, less broad and comprehensive than those which may include and uphold the whole Whig party of the United States. But all this is consistent, and shall, in my own case, practically consist, with a just sense of the evils of slavery; with an earnest opposition to every thing designed to prolong or extend it; with a firm resistance to all its encroachments on Northern rights; and above all, with an uncompromising hostility to all measures for introducing new slave States and new slave territories into our Union.

To this, then, let us pledge our united and cordial efforts. Let us call on the Executive to conform strictly to his pledges as to the present war. Let us demand of him to desist from all schemes of aggression and conquest. Let us demand of him not inconsiderately to reject the proffered mediation of Great Britain, and at any rate to confine all his military movements to the one great end of securing the restoration of peace. Let us, above all things, protest, in language not to be mistaken, against all measures which shall add another inch of slave-holding territory to the Union. In the vote of the House of Representative of the United States, on the 8th of August last, we have a sign of the times, and of the spirit of the times, full of encouragement. In that sign, let us go on and conquer.

Massachusetts Whigs cannot fail to conquer, Mr. President, with this and the other great issues to which I have alluded, in fit conjunction before them. With good candidates, and in a good cause, they have shown themselves to be all but invincible. Never had they better candidates; never a better cause, than now; and nothing is wanting to their entire and triumphant success, but those united, vigorous, determined efforts, which the spirit of this meeting assures me will be made.

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